



WHAT IS IT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

History is marked by the power of voice. From the women's suffrage movement of the early 20th century to Gandhi's nonviolent resistance to lead the successful campaign for India's independence from British rule to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s in the United States, using your voice can create meaningful social change.

Voice represents an individual's ability to influence their network, interpersonal connections and even people they don't know to raise awareness, promote, protest, advocate or advance a cause or social issue.

When you use your voice to uplift ideas that positively impact the world, you bring greater awareness and understanding to important issues. Your voice can mobilize people to take meaningful

action and gain the attention of leaders who can help drive the change you want to see.

Using your voice isn't always easy and sometimes takes bravery, especially when those closest to us may disagree. But when we choose silence, progress can stand still and the issues we care about may remain unchanged – or change in ways we hoped they wouldn't.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to using your voice. The ways in which we can uplift what we care about are as varied as the causes themselves. Likewise, the scale to which we use our voices can range from conversations with family and friends to taking part in a global movement. It's about finding what's meaningful to you and the causes you support.

WAYS TO USE YOUR VOICE



FIVE THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT VOICE



1. Good intentions can cause harm if not well-informed. Being well-intentioned about using your voice to support what you care about is not enough. Make sure you're informed about the best ways to use your voice to achieve the greatest good.



2. Don't stop at just a "like". Sharing an issue or cause on social media is a great first step, but it doesn't have to be the only one. Consider other actions such as making a donation, doing more research on the subject or joining a community conversation.



3. Show up for others. Personal experience with an issue isn't required for you to use your voice to show support. Being an ally and advancing the interests of an oppressed or

marginalized group even if you're not a member of that group is an important way to bring about social change.



4. Interpersonal conversations matter. For voice to be meaningful, you don't have to reach the masses. Something as simple as a one-on-one conversation with family, friends, or colleagues can go a long way in supporting a cause and raising greater awareness.



5. Make the commitment. Change doesn't always come overnight and some movements may take years. But this shouldn't discourage participation; it should encourage it. Being able to sustain a successful movement takes patience and requires those willing to use their voices to go the distance.



TAKE A DEEPER DIVE AND LEARN MORE



Beyond a quick share on social media, learn ways to [Effectively Leverage Your Voice for Social Causes](#)



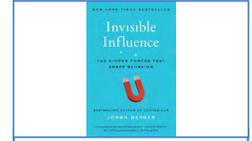
[The Guide to Allyship](#) offers insights into being an effective ally



Join or host a meaningful conversation around big issues with [Civic Dinners](#)



WATCH: [Transforming Slacktivism into Action](#) (TEDx Talk)



BOOK: [Invisible Influence: The Hidden Forces That Shape Behavior](#) by Jonah Berger

THINK ABOUT IT...

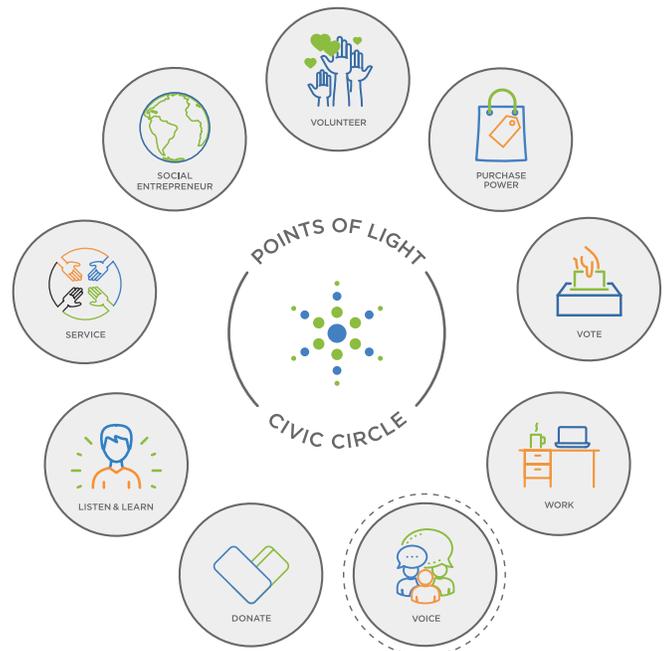


- What are some ways that you have used your voice in the past to support a cause you care about?
- Have you ever wanted to use your voice to support something you cared about but didn't? What held you back?
- After reading this guide, do you view using your voice to support a cause or talk about a topic any differently or in new ways?
- How would you influence others to use their voices?

WHAT NOW? WHAT NEXT?

- Do your homework and look for ways to use your voice to advance the causes you care about.
- Have a conversation with friends, family or your coworkers about an issue or cause you support.
- Voice is just one activity in the Points of Light Civic Circle that you can use to lead and lend support to causes you care about. To learn more, visit <https://pointsoflight.org/civicle/>.

These resources are being provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by Points of Light of any of the products, services or opinions. Points of Light bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links. Contact the external site for answers to questions regarding its content. If there are questions or concerns about the inclusion of a particular resource, please contact info@pointsoflight.org.



The **Civic Circle** represents your power to lead, lend support and take action for causes you care about and to lead a civic life.